(b) if so, the reasons for not taking up the job as yet; and

(c) the measures proposed to expedite the job after obtaining clearance from the Naval authorities?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Introduction of Direct Flight Between Hyderabad and Jeddah

648. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether direct flight from Hyderabad to Jeddah is proposed to be introduced on public demand; and

(b) if so, the measures taken to extend the runway at the Hyderabad airport to allow landing of international flight conveniently?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Cochin as Embarkation Point for Kerala Hajis

649. SHRI C.O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state whether the Government are considering the request of the State Government of Kerala for declaring Cochin International Airport as an Embarkation Point for Kerala Hajis from next year onwards?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): Yes, Sir. The Cochin Airport is being considered as an embarkation point for Kerala Hajis from Haj 2000 onwards.

Construction of Airport at Kannur

650. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI C.O. POULOSE:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received a letter from the Chief Minister of Kerala regarding the construction of an Airport at Kannur; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A high level team was sent, to visit the site for technical feasibility of the airport. The team has recommended that a runway of length more than 6600 ft cannot be constructed at Kannur. Moreover, Kannur is only 120 kms from Calicut and 135 kms from Mangalore. Under the existing policy, no greenfield airport is to be developed within an aerial distance of 150 Kms of the existing airport.

Introduction of Flights on New Delhi-Guwahati Sector

651. DR(SMT.) JOYASREE GOSWAMI MAHANTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for not introducing morning and evening flights to and fro Guwahati-New Delhi-Guwahati to connect the North-Eastern States so far;

(b) the steps initiated to improve the air connection to the North-Eastern region; and

(c) whether Government would consider to provide 50% concession to the students of Assam and North-Eastern States as an underdeveloped and backward area?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) The existing schedule of operation on Guwahati - Delhi sector is attached as statement (*see* below). Operators are free to operate to any station/on any route depending upon their commercial judgement subject to compliance with the Route' Dispersal Guidelines, which provide for certain minimum operatiôns in the North East and some other far flung areas.

(c) 50% concession is already being offered by Indian Airlines on its domestic sectors to all students including those studying jn Assam and North-Eastern States.